

*Printed vol 19*

IMPARTIAL REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

QUESTION,

FOR

EQUALIZING THE DUTIES,

UPON THE

TRADE,

BETWEEN

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD MOUNTMORRES.

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L O N D O N:

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## Impartial Reflections, &c.

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**I**T is not from a vain presumption of treating a subject which engrosses the public mind at the present moment with superior acuteness, and depth of argument.—But merely from a wish to state a few plain facts, that the following remarks, which long service and personal experience has enabled the author of these considerations to collect in our sister kingdom, are submitted to the impartial tribunal of the publick.

B

The

The difference between ancient and modern times seems to be marked most strongly in the faculty of amplification. Treaties which in classick authors occupy but a page, are now expanded into volumes, by tedious sophistry and redundant explanation.

The great question relative to Ireland, and the multiplied statements of the Treaty with that country for the equalization of the duties upon the trade of the two kingdoms, abundantly verify these observations. The publick prints teem with essays—the press groans with daily pamphlets upon this subject—the gaping auditors in publick assemblies prove the truth of the old adage, *scientia brevis, ignorantia praelonga est*—and even in our most admired samples of eloquence, the frequent and well-known repetition of “now let me suppose a case,”

case," demonstrate how much time is wasted by those who wear out the night in vague conjectures and desultory declamations.

The faculty of some who appear foremost in the paths of eloquence, seems to be that of perplexing and of misrepresenting, of bewildering the mind in the labyrinth of unfounded supposition and inapplicable hypothesis.

Of the value and importance of Ireland to this country, more particularly since the fatal dismemberment of the empire, it is superfluous to say much. Upwards of one million three hundred thousand pounds annually remitted to Irish landlords and proprietors who reside in London,\* beside a balance of trade

\* Vide List of Absentees, by Redmond Morris, Esq. Faulkner, Dublin, 1768.

considerably in favour of Great Britain, are the best proofs of her importance.

It were to be wished, that the same certitude and precision with which the mind of man is so delighted in mathematical learning, extended itself to political researches. Certainty, however, is not to be found in political arithmetick, but all that is left in these disquisitions is, to search for what is most probable, and comes the nearest to truth.

In stating the balance of trade between these countries, the Committee of the Privy Council remark the great difference between the Custom-house books in Great Britain and Ireland.

If we are to believe the first, it is greatly in favour of England; if the latter

latter, considerably in favour of Ireland.

Thus circumstanced, it is conceived that an *option* should be made in favour of the veracity of the one or the other, to avoid the doubts and political scepticism which an attempt to reconcile them must necessarily produce.

The *Ledger* of the Inspector General, from whence the following account was taken, was established under the auspices of a Committee of the British House of Lords in 1696, and has ever been considered a record of the greatest authority which this or any other country possesses; and the forms and regulations are said to have been prescribed by Dr. Davenant—a name too well known in the list of commercial writers to need a designation or elogium.

The

The Irish books were never revised by such authority. Precision is not to be sought after in records, which have been regulated merely by Custom-house officers; nor can the commercial records of a country, ever limited and cramped in trade, be compared with those of a kingdom, celebrated for her extensive science, and improvement in the ways of commerce.

The following table is extracted from the admirable performance of Mr. Chalmers's history of the comparative strength of Great Britain in the four last wars, compiled from the Ledger of the Inspector General to the Custom-House of England, of the imports and exports between Great Britain and Ireland.

A

A Table of Exports and Imports between England and Ireland.

Mr.

Years.	Imports.	Exports.	Unfavourable balance.	Favourable balance.
1700	£. 233,853	£. 261,115	—	£. 27,262
1701	285,390	296,144	—	—
1702	258,121	215,112	—	—
1720	—	—	—	—
21	323,930	399,597	—	75,667
22	—	—	—	—
1740	—	—	—	—
41	380,748	700,885	—	320,137
42	—	—	—	—
1750	—	—	—	—
51	613,751	1,210,564	—	596,813
52	—	—	—	—
1760	—	—	—	—
61	882,451	1,351,737	—	469,286
62	—	—	—	—
1770	—	—	—	—
71	1,279,147	2,024,357	—	745,210
72	—	—	—	—

Mr. Chalmers adds : “ in this detail we see a regular and a pleasing progress; and we perceive what excellent customers the sister kingdoms are to each other. The prosperity of both ought therefore to be the care of each, because the happiness and interest of each must be necessarily found in the result.”

From this table the balance of trade in the year 1772 is £.745,210 in favour of England; and it is to be observed, that it has *increased* gradually in proportion to the improvement of Ireland.

One circumstance deserves particular notice, that the balance of trade was considerably against England in the year 1702, to the amount of £.43,008; this

this year was the period of the greatest commercial *depression* in Ireland, on account of the extinction of the woollen manufacture in Ireland, by the addresses of the Lords and Commons of England to King William. A revolution which gave liberty and affluence to England, insured political servitude and poverty to Ireland.

The inference, however, to be drawn from it is fair, that the advantage to be had from Ireland was, and ever will be, in proportion to her *commercial* prosperity.

Left I should dwell too long upon the value of Ireland, and her *mercantile* importance, upon a subject of such amplitude and exuberance, and expand these considerations by an unnecessary preface, and thereby incur the charge

C                      prolixity.

I shall submit the following petition upon the protecting duties, which was presented to the House of Commons of Ireland last session ; brief as it is, it contains a state of the question, and the leading features of the unjust Tariff, which at present subsists between these countries.

It is necessary to premise, that as the convention from the volunteer corps were then sitting in Dublin, the House of Commons thought proper to reject it unheard. The designation which was assumed by Mr. Travers Hartley, member for the city of Dublin, and other merchants of the Chamber of Commerce, was their plea for this conduct, lest other bodies, under illegal descriptions, might address themselves to that assembly to promote the reform  
of

of parliament, or other *innovations* in the state.

A learned gentleman, who has since been advanced to the bench of judges, signalized himself much upon this occasion, by deprecating the rejection of this petition ; the temporary plaudit of the gallery, and the unwary burst of popular applause, have been continued to him in the grateful recollection of his countrymen.

As this petition was not heard, it is difficult to say what the quantum of the imposition intended to be levied upon the importation of English goods was ; it was not so unreasonable as to equalize the prohibition, ; but it was said, that Mr. Hartley intended to pro-

pose a duty of half a crown on coarse cloths imported, in order to give a currency to their own in the Irish markets.

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes, in Parliament aſſembled.

The humble Petition of the Merchants compoſing the Council of the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Dublin,

*Sheweth,*

THAT you petitioners, appointed by a numerous and reſpectable body of the traders of this metropolis, to watch over, and promote their commercial intereſts, flatter themſelves they will  
not

not be thought too presuming, if, moved by the distresses of multitudes of their fellow citizens, and in compliance with the duties of their delegation, they humbly intreat the attention of this Honourable House to the present depressed state of the manufacturers of this city and kingdom.

That your petitioners humbly conceive this unfavourable situation principally to proceed from the very unequal and unjust terms on which Great Britain and Ireland trade — Ireland opening freely her ports, at low duties, to all the manufactures of Great Britain — Great Britain prohibiting, by excessive duties, almost all the fabricks of Ireland.

That

That your petitioners beg leave to assure this Honourable House, that they feel, as well as profess, for their Sister Kingdom, the most cordial affection ; and fully acknowledge this country to be so connected with her, that they must stand or fall together ; they, however, consider it incumbent on them humbly to represent, that the evident principles of policy and justice require *that British manufactures imported into Ireland, should pay the same duties that are imposed on Irish manufactures of a similar species imported into Great-Britain.*

Your Petitioners humbly beseech this Honourable House to take the premises into consideration, and to grant such relief as to its great wisdom shall

shall seem meet, and your Petitioners  
will pray.

Signed at the desire,  
and on behalf of the Council,

\*TRAVERS HARTLEY, President.  
ANTHONY DERMOTT, } Vice-  
DANIEL MARSTON, } Presidents

\* M. P. for Dublin.

COMPARISON of the DUTIES paid on the  
MANUFACTURES imported into  
ENGLAND and IRELAND

		Irish Money.			
		English Duty.		Irish Duty.	
		£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
Broad Cloth or old Drapery, the Yard	—	2	0 6	0	0 6
Kerseys, Serges, or new Drapery, do.	—	0	5 11½	0	0 2
Refined Sugars in Loaves, the Hundred Weight	—	5	6 10	1	14 0
Beer or Porter, the Barrel, at 32 Gallons, valued at 20s.	—	1	5 1	0	1 4
Spirits, the Gallon (Gin or Whisky)	—	0	8 0	0	2 2½
Leather Manufactures. per 100l. in Value, on Oath	—	62	10 0	10	4 9
Wrought Silks, the Pound	—	prohibited		0	7 9
Thread and Cotton Stockings, the Dozen Pair, valued at 40s. per Oath	—	0	10 2	0	4 0
Candles, } The Hundred Weight	—	1	9 9	0	5 6
Soap, } Not Importable in Packages less than 224lb.	—	2	4 0	about 7	6
Starch, }	—				
Hair Powder, }	—	4	4 0	0	6 7
Chip Hats, ditto, not less than 75 Dozen, into London only, per Dozen at 1l. 4s. value	—	0	4 4	0	2 5
All Cotton Manufactures which pay on Value, for every 100l. Value on Oath	29	15	10 10	10	4 9
All Iron Manufactures which pay on Value, for every 100l. Value, on Oath	29	15	10 10	10	4 9
And for every Hundred Weight	—	0	5 11½	0	4 9
White Salt, the Bushel of 84 Pounds	—	0	9 2	0	5 1

Thus where England lays a duty of forty shillings upon the importation of Irish goods—Ireland lays a duty of six pence upon the same article.

This is admitted on all hands to contain the out line of this great question—this is the Tarif established between the two countries for a series of years—prohibitions which obtain in no other case, nor against any other country against the sister kingdom! imitating thereby the conduct of those churlish petty despots, in private life, who preserve a polite courteous demeanor to strangers, but reserve their moments of ill temper and caprice for their families and dearest connections.

D

While

While men talk of spontaneous non-importation agreements in Ireland, let them remember that here is a perpetual non-importation agreement against Ireland, with all the form and warranty of law—look for the word penalty—or the word Ireland in the index—it is a matter of indifference which—for you will scarcely ever find one without the other. Thus you may trace Ireland through the code, as you do a wounded man in a crowd by his blood.

While this is the state of the commercial intercourse between the two countries, it is to be remembered that no prohibitions exist in her trade, with other countries; and that by the free trade Ireland has lately obtained, her commerce has no other restraints  
than

than what are prescribed by the waves,  
and by the winds.

If the Irish counteract this system of prohibition, either by similar duties, which they call protecting duties; or by voluntary general non-importation agreements, our commercial intercourse will cease: the intercourse with other nations is still open to her: the strange bigotry which prevails in that country, and the unhappy spirit of intolerance, has driven numbers of her inhabitants to seek an asylum in foreign countries. Necessity has begot industry: some of the first commercial houses at Ostend, at Bourdeaux, at Cadiz, have Irish names in their *firms*. With those they may form a beneficial trade. Mercantile connections lead to political; and political connections, to alienation from this country.

In

In this situation, the present minister has adopted the just system of equalizing the duties upon the trade of these islands, to blend their commercial interests, and fortify their union by the ties of mutual advantage and reciprocity: a system which will be *thwarted* by party divisions; the turbulency of disappointed ambition, and the natural distrust and jealousy of trade; a system embarrassed by various and jarring interests, which, however, it is to be hoped will sooner or later take place, as it is founded upon equity and justice.

But if it should miscarry through a jealousy of the communication of these privileges; if the chimera of being underfold by the unskilled in arts; and as yet unconversant in manufactures, by those who want capitals and enter-

enterprize, and are unacquainted with the *mysteries* of trade: if through these considerations, this scheme should fail, it does not require much sagacity to foretell, that the continuance of these prohibitions will operate as the prohibition of the Irish live cattle, when the importation of them was declared a nuisance in the days of the Second Charles, which drove them into the beef trade, and serve principally to enrich one, instead of enriching both countries.

It has been justly observed, that if Ireland is admitted to a participation of trade and commerce, she ought to contribute her just *quota* and adequate proportion to the support and defence of the British Empire. A position the justice of which cannot be denied; but  
the

the author of these considerations never having had the honour of sitting in the House of Commons of either kingdom, would wish to avoid entering into a question of finance; what that *quota* of contribution shall be, or what arrangements shall take place, must be left to those whose situations qualify them to form a judgment, from her revenues, and fiscal ability.

The idea of furnishing a naval defence for the protection of her trade, seems to be the most useful appropriation of her abundant revenue, if it should through these advantages surpass her domestick expence, an arrangement justified by the naval defence which *belonged* to her at an early period; and by those frigates which were supported by the Irish establishment

ment in Lord Strafford's days; an arrangement which the curious in the annals of Ireland will find in the letters of that despotick, but able Viceroy.

Such have been the prejudices which have obtained against the enlargement of the Irish trade since the restoration; so many are the objections which operate against it, at the present period, that it would lead to a wide field of discussion, and to a task of refutation to which the author finds himself unequal.

One circumstance he cannot help observing, that many of these fatal consequences were dreaded upon the freedom of trade, and independance of legislature, which she obtained in 1780. No inconvenience, nor no competition  
have

have arose from thence; and the fears of the present moment may be as ill founded, and as chimerical.

It is however just to observe, that matters of this importance, and arrangements of this extent, cannot be the production of a moment; the great man who is at the helm, deserves much commendation for his caution, delay, and circumspection. By these means, objections which precede his plans, may be removed, which would be difficult to remedy at an after period.

The complaints of the West-India merchants, and their fears of the smuggling of foreign sugars into England through Ireland, may surely be removed by the adoption and efficacious execution of the English regulations against  
the

the smuggler. If the edict of the French King against the freightage of the French sugars in foreign bottoms, and the consideration which is clearly proved in a late pamphlet, that Ireland did not import in the two last years *a* sufficient quantity of sugars for her own consumption; but that nearly one half of her demand was imported from England, be not sufficient.

Since the report from the Privy-Council has been published, a most respectable body of men, since upon them the interests of learning and science depend; interests which in a country like this, should be paramount to every other; I mean that of the booksellers, and their representation about the copy rights, demand peculiar attention.

E

If

If there is any species of property which demands particular attention, it is the property which a man has in the production of his thoughts, and the *emanation* of his mind, every body knows, that this property is *secured* to authors, or their assignees, for fourteen years, by the law of the land.

This favourable provision for authors, is as yet unknown in Ireland; but it is humbly apprehended, that the adoption of the 8th of Queen Anne, would be an advantage to Ireland; and if a clause were superadded, to allow prosecution in the Irish Courts, for printing books without licence, entered at Stationers Hall in London; with such provisions for the stock actually on the hands of the Irish booksellers, as the wisdom of the legislature shall  
*devise,*

*devise*, it would prevent the sale of these *pirated* editions, and remove the objections of that respectable body of men.

This great question has so long occupied the consideration of parliament and such have been the restrictions laid upon the Irish trade by English laws that it seems a rooted prejudice that the commercial advantages which they obtain, are a subtraction and drawback from the wealth of this country.

But when we reflect on the great authorities which have delivered opinions on this subject, diametrically opposite to what local interest and *monopoly*, have *prescribed*, if what the best informed, and the greatest luminaries

of political science have said, may be deemed the sense of the people : we shall be able to determine, whether the commercial restraints laid upon Ireland in past times, were dictated by wisdom ; and whether they were governed by the sense, or the prejudice of this country in ~~pastimes~~ *times*.

The first regular settlement of Ireland, was in the days of James the First: those who have read the reasons why Ireland was *never* thoroughly subdued, will find, that the English authority did not extend far in that country till after Tyrone's rebellion.

When the scheme of the Scotch colony was in contemplation, Lord Bacon in his advice to the king, expresses himself thus : “ Next, as to the liberties and  
f ran

franchises your Majesty will be pleased to give them, when I speak of libertys I do not mean libertys of jurisdiction *as counties palatine* or the like, but liberties tending only to commodity, as liberty to transport their native commodities upon *free* and *easy terms* to this and other countries which I would recommend to your Majesty."

Lord Strafford himself held the same principle in one of his dispatches to secretary Coke, " Next I send you the remonstrances of the two houses of Parliament about the prohibition on the export of hydes, their reasons are unanswerable, for where the general trade of a country and their export is concerned, there I have ever been of opinion that the less, that you meddle the better."

This

This was Lord Strafford's opinion, arbitrary in other respects, his notions about trade, were just and liberal, and he was too wise not to know that a partial and restrained trade, is no trade ; for trade sickens at controul, and dies upon restraint, and upon prohibition.

It was upon the same liberal plan that a man of a very different party, and principle, I mean Oliver Cromwell, extended the benefits of the act of navigation to Ireland (of which I shall speak more fully hereafter) and the advantages of a common participation of trade to the colonies.

After the restoration a most unreasonable jealousy took place about Ireland—the 12th of Ch. 2. c. 18, restraining the mariners to *two thirds English*

*gliff*—and the explanation of the act of navigation of the 14th of Ch. II, forbidding the transport of the colonial trade to Ireland, or Scotland, with an exception only as to the export from them, of provisions to the colonies.

This jealousy was partly caused by the envy of the great merit, and riches of the Duke of Ormond, to this was owing the prohibition of the import of Irish cattle, as a nuisance; but even at that period Sir Josiah Child in his elements of trade—and Sir William Temple in his letter to Lord Effex lament the poverty, and reprobate the system which took place in regard to Ireland.

It is true that after the revolution the idea of a competition between  
England

England and Ireland, prevailed generally in this country, this appears in the writings of Dr. Davenent, and though he advises every indulgence to the trade of Ireland, yet he wishes it to be restrained in these particulars, where the cheapness of living might enable them to undersell Great Britain in material concerns.

There is however a very able refutation of these doctrines of Dr. Davenant, by a learned and ingenious dignitary of the church\*, he has put the question abstractedly, whether, a poor country can undersell a rich one, and he has decided not only from reasoning on the superior science and expertness of the richer state, but what is more from fact and experience, that they cannot. —The case which he mentions is that  
of

\* Dean Tucker

of Sweden, where though the barr iron is brought from thence to England, though it pays a duty in a raw unmanufactured state at its entrance, though it is carried to the inland counties and when manufactured there, pays a duty upon export, yet the Swedes have in vain set up *founderys* and Iron works to rival England. Such are the advantages that superior science and wealth give England over her, tho' *Sweden* is perhaps one of the poorest countries in Europe, as may be collected from one circumstance, that travelling in that country does not exceed one penny per mile.

A jealousy seems to *pervade*, a very numerous body of merchants who have lately met relative to the effects which opening the Irish trade to this country

F

may

may have upon foreign negotiations. But upon a representation which was made to this country from Ireland, relative to the establishment of the hempen and sail cloth manufactories, in 1703, and also about the agreement in 1698, between the two countries about the linnen and hempen manufactures, which was never adhered to by England. Similar representations were made by the Hamburgh merchants to the house of Lords\* but the venerable and revered name of Lord Somers appears against their opinions, and those arguments of injuring the trade of England with Russia and other countries, were overruled in the report, which was drawn up by him upon that occasion, as it appears upon the journals of the House of Lords.

\* Lords Journals, 1704,

Sir Matthew Decker who wrote in later days speaks more strongly in favor of Ireland; and considers the restraints upon her trade as beneficial to the natural enemies of England, and that the prohibition to export their woollen goods was an obligation upon them, to smuggle raw wool to the French coasts at all hazard, and supply them with that necessary material, to the infinite mischief and detriment of the English trade.

And it is well known and remembered by many, that Sir John Bernard the great oracle of trade, and member for the city of London, constantly expressed himself to the same effect in the days of Sir R. Walpole, and considered all restraints upon the trade of Ireland,

land, as eminently detrimental to England.

Many of these authorities apply more to the general question which is past of the freedom of the Irish trade, than to the question of the moment, but Mr. Postlethwaite in his commercial dictionary, considers every restraint upon the trade of Ireland, as a drawback from the wealth of England, and that while England and her metropolis continue the emporium of the empire, the seat of the arts, of pleasure and preferment, all the wealth of Ireland after circulating through that country, must terminate here at last, as the blood after circulating through the limbs terminates at last and returns to the heart in the human body.

At

At the period of the union the same jealousy of a competition prevailed with regard to the Scotch, which now prevails with regard to the Irish; and in the year 1780, many were the jealousies about the Irish trade, but neither; have been justified in the slightest degree; certain it is, whether owing to the want of capitals, to experience, to industry, or enterprize, the crowding her manufactures into the capital, where labour is dear. Ireland has not availed herself of her advantages. The ventures made to America have excited much complaint of the slowness of the returns; nations that have been recently emancipated, require time to recover the use of their faculties, and like the antient sage when ~~the~~ his fetters were struck off rather incline to speculate and allegorize upon the pain of their  
past

past, and the pleasure of their present situation, than to make use of their faculties, and turn them to advantage.

Of the writers who have appeared upon this subject, one *noble Lord* (Lord Sheffield) deserves particular attention. Candor and truth must pay a due tribute to the materials which he has so laboriously and industriously collected. Sorry at the same time to express a doubt, that his pamphlet about America, has introduced measures which are most unsatisfactory to the people of that country, and which prevent a disposition to returning regard and reconciliation.

The noble Lord expresses the greatest *veneration* for the act of navigation as  
*confined*

*confined* to this country, and which he would not have extended to Ireland.

I agree with him in the regard for that palladium of the wealth and commerce of England as it *originally* stood, not such as it now appears upon the code, but as it was originally framed.

An idea has been thrown out in an able pamphlet, that the first act, the act of the 12th of Charles the second, emphatically called the act of navigation, extended its privileges to Ireland ; but it must be remembered, that three fourths of the mariners on board must be *English*, according to that act of parliament, and the act of the 14th of Charles II. c. 11. and other subsequent acts, lay many more prohibitions upon trade with regard to Ireland.

The

The act, however, which I allude to, is the act of navigation, which was brought forward in the days of Oliver Cromwell. This act extends to Ireland by name, “ and to all the subjects of the common-wealth.” This is indeed an act of navigation, the definition of which should justly be an act to confine the colonial trade of the empire to its subjects ; but the explanations introduced after the restoration are laws of monopoly, prejudice, and exclusion.

But this leads me to say a word upon the subject, and to touch upon an arduous discussion, the history of the navigation laws.

It is to be lamented, that a most able pamphlet, which appeared in 1759, upon the great question which  
 arose

arose about the construction of the treaty in 1674 between England and Holland, is now out of print ; every thing relating to navigation laws is there *treated* with the greatest perspicuity, and wonderful labour and research. The supposed author is so deservedly and highly esteemed, and his abilities so well known as to render any elogium superfluous.

The islands of Barbadoes, Bermudas, Antigua, &c. continuing to resist the power of Oliver Cromwell, and the new establishment, were the cause of an act to restrain the commerce of those islands to the shipping of the commonwealth. This had a view particularly to the Dutch, who were aspiring to be the general carriers of the world, and contains in it the rudiments of the act

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of

of navigation: This took place in 1650.

The act, which passed the following year 1651, every body knows was the cause of the Dutch war, and restrains the colonial trade to the shipping of the British empire.

But what is remarkable, it extends the privileges of the navigation law to Ireland by name, and under the general description “ of the subjects of this common-wealth, and her possessions.” These acts are added in the appendix, as they are materially different from those which appear upon the statute book, and are taken out of a book which is likely to lie upon the shelf, though printed by the Usurper’s Printer, namely, *Scobell’s* collection.

From

From this circumstance it is proved irrefragably and beyond doubt, that if the proposed scheme should take place, it would be so far from affecting the original intention of the act of navigation, that it would perfectly coincide, and correspond with that venerable palladium of English wealth, and English commerce.

The manner in which the scheme has originated in the Irish parliament, and the reception it met with, the ministerial mode of *bringing* it forward, and the *manœuvres* that have taken place, are matters infinitely above the comprehension of the author of these reflections.

Too humble to be flattered by their confidence—too much persecuted in this country to be honoured by their regard—it would be equally wrong, and equally presumptuous in him to justify, or to praise the ministerial arrangements upon this occasion.

The essence and substance of the equalizing scheme is to be regarded, not the form and ceremonial of its introduction, but if it should be deemed inadmissible in its present state—if mutual retractions and concessions are necessary,—if every man agrees that something should be done to promote commercial intercourse between the two countries—though they differ in the form—if jarring interests, or factious misrepresentations, *render* the present propositions impracticable—the early  
annals

annals of the Irish Parliament point out a method, by which subjects of as great import as the present have been carried through, namely, that of appointing Commissioners from the Lords and Commons of Ireland to confer with an equal number here—beside the present advantage, future periods might reap the benefit of a system of conciliation, the form of which might be repeated and observed, when the same difficulties arose, and when mutual concessions were necessary.

Numerous are the instances which occur in the early annals of Parliament in Ireland, of difficulties which have been adjusted, by appointing Commissioners from thence; not only during the troublesome periods of the reign of Charles the First, and of the Protectorate

torate, but after the restoration, and the advantages which occur of discussions of intricate matters before a select and confined body, over that of debates in large and popular assemblies, are too evident to dwell upon.

Many arguments are thrown out in daily publications, against giving those advantages to Ireland, at a time when she has relinquished her subordination to the supremacy of the English Parliament; but let it be remembered, that it is by a similitude of laws and constitution, and by a reciprocity of advantage, that Ireland alone can be preserved to this country.

The happy measure of the extension of the privileges of trade to Ireland, was productive of the most  
beneficial

beneficial consequences in the protectorate; it was by these antecedent benefits that Cromwell was enabled to unite the three kingdoms in one Parliament, to which Ireland and Scotland deputed each of them *thirty* representatives; a measure which in the present times, however impracticable it may be, is certainly the wish of some enlightened and well informed men, was effected by him without trouble or difficulty, by the *conciliatory* method of mutual privileges and common advantages.

In the present situation of England; and after the ruinous debt which has been entailed upon her, and the millions that have been expended in the American fade, it would be unreasonable to give any advantage to Ireland, if it were a subtraction

subtraction from the trade or riches of England; but that remains to be proved; and it would be the height of political folly to suppose, that what is to be given to Ireland, will be a drawback from the wealth of England; merely because the ambition of some, the local interests of others, or the designs of a party, who wish only to possess themselves of power, and of office, and to play the old game of ousting ministers by popular clamour, have pronounced it, or to mistake the cry of faction for the voice of the people.

In nations which have existed for a length of time, like towns that have been long built, regularity of system in commerce, legislation or building is rarely to be found—however, every attempt to bring about regularity of system

system is to be wished for, and every attempt to approximate the truth; though it cannot be attained, is praise worthy.

An equality of weights and measures is an article of the great Charter—in the material articles of life all over England, and yet perhaps, if it were attempted now, however, desirable it might be when considered in the abstract, such inequalities have obtained by length of time, and deviation from the original intention, that it would meet with the greatest difficulties; and yet the measure must be acknowledged to be desirable if it could be attained.

It has been supposed, that notwithstanding it appears at first view a vast

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and

and mighty advantage for Ireland to participate in all the benefits of English commerce, yet she will not most probably at least for some time, profit materially, by them; but this does not lessen the value of the donation, on the side of England, for if she gives her the power and capacity of enriching herself by trade, and if indolence or an *innate vis inertiae* in her inhabitants, should prevent her from making use of those advantages, the fault will be on her side, and she will have no one to blame but herself.

Probably it will not have the immediate operation that is conjectured, it will take some time before she discovers her vantage ground, and if we may reason from what has happened

pened since the free trade, her commercial progress will be retarded and gradual.

It is not likely however, that Ireland by any possible event, or any supposed advantage, can be the rival of England in riches or trade,—since there is a constant progression in human affairs, and nations that have surpassed others in the contest of trade and commerce, will probably continue the same advantageous progression and leave others behind them, with the same proportionable distance between them.

Before I conclude, I shall mention a circumstance, which at present engages the contemplation of a great and powerful nation, the neighbour and the rival of England; a question similar to that which at present engages the publick mind, and which indents in many cir-

cumstances with the question of equalizing the duties between Great Britain and Ireland; a question which for more than a century past has occupied the counsels of that country: and has lately been revived by a production which does honor to the age, and to the nation; I mean an equalization of the interior duties in the different provinces of France.

This inequality of imposts arose at so early a period as the reign of King John of France; some of the provinces not complying with his demands, and remonstrating against the excessive levies which he was obliged to make; were declared by him, *les provinces etrangeres*, and heavier duties were laid upon ex-  
ports

ports to them from provinces that were more favourable to his views.

From this, various inequalities arose in the duties, in different provinces, to the general detriment of trade, and inconvenience to the whole kingdom.

It was a favourite object of Louis XIVth. and was prosecuted under the Administration of Colbert, to create a general Tariff for the whole kingdom, and to subject the merchandizes of France to duties only upon their export from the frontiers and seaports, but to leave the interior provinces either free from imposts, or to reduce them to the standard of equality.

Such,

Such, however, were the difficulties attending this measure, that Colbert succeeded only in three provinces, the rest remained subject to the motly system of taxes upon interior communication, which had been produced by chance or by the caprice of a tyrant.

This measure was afterwards renewed soon after the Administration of Cardinal Fleury; but it was found so difficult to adjust the different quotas of contribution, and particularly to find the true level and just equalization of the gabelle, or duty upon salt, which constitutes so material an article of the French finances; such were the jarring interests that it was necessary to reconcile, and so strong were the remonstrances of the parliament of  
Brittany

Brittany in particular, that it was necessary to be relinquished.

In Mr. Neckar's incomparable treatise upon the French finances, this subject is revived, and recommended with all the powers of reason and eloquence.

Thus, what in the earlier days of this country, was recommended by a Bacon, laboured in another by a Colbert, and recommended by a Neckar, and actually carried into execution in this by Cromwell, namely an extension of the benefits of trade to the component parts of the empire under a just and equal system of duties, is proposed by the present plan.

I have

I have already said that I have no reason to be the friend of administration, but the mind should not be warped by personal flights, or personal considerations, in reflections upon measures of publick and general welfare, and in the contemplation of truth.

What has been found difficult in France, what the power of a despotick Prince could not effect, a system founded in reciprocal advantage, and common welfare, may it is to be hoped be effected by the milder and more amiable, though not less powerful and efficacious despotism of reason, common advantage, mutual necessity, reciprocal benefit, and the general welfare of the British Empire.

The

The equalization of the duties upon trade between Great Britain and Ireland, it is hoped, will secure the ties between the two countries, and render their attachment indissoluble. It will give common strength to the the empire, particular advantage to the component parts. An untried and fallow country, has unknown resources. The population of countries increase in proportion to the soundness of their policy and the wisdom of their laws, and wherever the inlet may be, while a common fund of wealth circulates through the two kingdoms, the general mass of riches in the Empire will be increased.

It is alone by the mildness of government and beneficence of rule, that divided

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vided parts of an Empire are rivetted to each other.

The power of Rome was preserved over a vast Empire by a common participation of benefits ; and till the late fatal American war, the mild and happy genius of England led her to this just and equitable system of government over that extensive continent. A government like the law of gravitation in the system of the universe, powerful and efficacious in proportion to the distance.

The evidence of the body of English merchants, has been attempted to be garbelled to answer the purposes of party, but their testimony upon this occasion, upon the whole contradicts the assertion that the system of the  
com-

commercial world was a spirit of monopoly, and of engrossing all advantages to themselves.

Their language is, that they do not desire to deprive the Irish of the advantages which Providence has given them, nor of the common right of making the most of their own materials.

The tenor of their conduct proves, that they do not seek for advantage in the restraints and prohibitions of any description of their fellow subjects.

Their testimony upon this occasion proves, that they expect preference and pre-emption from the superior skill of their workmen, and the superior value of their merchandizes.

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As their acquiescence in the Irish free trade in 1780, proved that they did not think it was necessary, that one nation should be impoverished that another might continue rich, but that each country might thrive without prejudice to the other, and that the market of the universe was wide enough for both kingdoms.

APPE-

A P P E N D I X.

[*Rudiments of Navigation Act.*]

From SCOBELL's STATUTES,

Page 132. Anno 1650.

C A P. 28. \*

*Trade with the Barbada's, Virginia, Bermuda's,  
and Antego, Prohibited.*

WHEREAS in Virginia, and in the islands of Barbada's, Antego, St. Christophers, Mevias, Mounfirat, Bermuda's, and divers other islands and places in America, there hath been and are colonies and plantations, which were planted at the cost, and settled by the people, and by authority of this nation, which are and ought to be subordinate to, and dependent upon England; and hath ever since the planting thereof been, and ought to be subject to such laws, orders and regulations as are or shall be made by the parliament of England; and whereas divers acts of rebellion have been committed by many persons inhabiting in Barbada's, Antego, Bermuda's and Virginia, whereby they have most traiterously, by force and subtilty, usurped a power of government, and seized the states of many well-affected persons into their hands, and banished

\* Blackstone, vol. 1, p. 418.

others, and have set up themselves in opposition to, and distinct from this state and commonwealth, many of the chief actors in, and promoters of these rebellions, having been transported and carried over to the said plantations in foreign ships, without leave, licence or consent of the Parliament of England; the Parliament of England taking the premises into consideration, and finding themselves obliged to use all speedy, lawful and just means for the suppression of the said rebellion in the said plantations, and reducing the same to fidelity and due obedience, so as all peaceable and well-affected people, who have been robbed, spoiled, imprisoned or banished through the said treasonable practices, may be restored to the freedom of their persons, and possession of their own lands and goods, and due punishment inflicted upon the said delinquents, do declare all and every the said persons in Barbadoes, Antego, Bermudas, and Virginia, that have contrived, abetted, aided or assisted those horrid rebellions, or have since willingly joined with them, to be notorious robbers and traitors, and such as by the law of nations are not to be permitted any manner of commerce or traffic with any people whatsoever; and do forbid to all manner of persons, foreigners and and others, all manner of commerce, traffic and correspondence whatsoever, to be used or held with the said rebels in the Barbada's, Bermuda's, Virginia and Antego, or either of them.

And be it enacted by this present Parliament, and by the authority of the same, That after due publication of this act made, to the end that none may justly pretend ignorance, it shall and may be lawful to any the fleet or ships sent forth or employed

employed by the Parliament, or any private men of war or ships to be allowed or approved in that behalf by the immediate power of Parliament, or the council of state established by Parliament, to seize, surprize and take all and all manner of ships, vessels and goods, of what nature or kind soever, belonging to all persons whatsoever, whether foreigners or others, or of what nation soever, that shall be found or met withall, trading or going to trade, or coming from trading with the said rebels, or in or at the said island of Barbadoes, Bermudas, Virginia, or Antego aforesaid, or any part or parts thereof, or that shall hold any correspondence with the said rebels, or yield them any assistance or relief for the supporting their said rebellion: and the same ships and goods so surprised, to send in to be proceeded against in the Court of Admiralty by virtue of this act; and the judges of that court finding the same to be within the tenor and true meaning of this act, adjudge the same to be well taken, and to be good and lawful prize.

And for the better information of the said court, and to the end the proceedings therein may be acted and done according to the rules of law and justice, and that nothing irregular may therein, or by the takers, be acted or committed, Be it further enacted, That none of the goods nor tackle, apparel or furniture of the said ships so to be surprised by virtue of this act, shall be embezzled or purloined, but shall be preserved safe and entire till judgment be first given in the said Court of Admiralty, or other order or decree there made thereupon: and that all the commissions, consignments, bills of lading, cockets, letters, and all other instruments and writings whatsoever,  
that

that shall be found on board the said ships and vessels, shall be duly sent up to the said Court of Admiralty : and that also two or three of the officers or principal persons of, or found in every such ship or vessel, shall either be brought up to be examined upon oath in the said court, as well touching the said writings found in the said ship, and the proprietors, owners and masters of the same ships, and the goods therein, and the places from whence they come, and to whom consigned, and whether bound, and such other questions and interrogatories as in each particular case shall be found meet ; or otherwise, in case they cannot with conveniency be sent up, that then they be so examined duly upon oath, before the chief officer of some port in England, or the next justice of the peace, concerning the premises before recited ; and their examinations, together with all the writings found on board the said ships or vessels, to be duly transmitted to the said court ; and the judges of the said court thereupon, and upon such other proofs and evidences as shall be duly made, or exhibited before them, shall proceed to judgment, and give definitive sentence by virtue of this act, according as the nature of the fact shall be proved before them, and according to the rules and grounds of justice : and if judgment shall be given for the same to be lawful prize, then it shall be disposed in such sort and manner as is in this present act afterwards limited and appointed.

And to prevent for the time to come, and to hinder the carrying over of any such persons as are enemies to this commonwealth, or that may prove dangerous to any of the English plantations in America, the Parliament doth forbid and prohibit all ships of any foreign nation whatsoever,  
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to come to, or trade in, or traffic with any of the English plantations in America, or any islands, ports or places thereof, which are planted by, and in possession of the people of this commonwealth, without licence first had and obtained from the Parliament or Council of State.

And be it further enacted, ordained and declared by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the twentieth day of November, 1650, it shall and may be lawful for any ship or ships sent forth by the parliament, or allowed of by the Parliament or Council of State, to seize, take and surprize any ship or ships of any foreign nation whatsoever, that shall be outward bound to any of the said plantations, ports or places, without such licence as aforesaid, and from and after the first of January, 1650, It shall and may be lawful for such ships sent forth and allowed as aforesaid, to seize, take, and surprize any foreign ships that shall be found trading at any of the plantations, islands and places aforesaid, without such licence as aforesaid; and from and after the 20th day of March, 1650, it shall and may be lawful for any of the Parliament's ships, or private men of war, allowed of by the Parliament or Council of State for the time being, to seize, take and surprize any ship or ships that are coming from, or have traded at any of the plantations as aforesaid, without such licence as aforesaid: and all such ships so taken, with all goods, tackle, apparel and furniture, to send into some port of this commonwealth, to be proceeded against in the Court of Admiralty, as in this act is ordered, limited and appointed in case of trading to Barbadoes, Antego, Bermudas, and Virginia, or any of them: all which prizes so to be taken  
and

and adjudged by virtue of this act, shall be disposed of as followeth; that is to say, of what shall be taken by the ships sent forth by the Parliament, two thirds thereof to be to the use of the Commonwealth, for the service of the navy, as the Parliament shall direct: and one other third part to be to the commanders, officers and company of those ships by whom the same shall be taken respectively, according to the usual rules of division amongst them: and for what shall be taken by private men of war allowed as aforesaid, to be to the use of the owners or setters forth of the said Ships, as they themselves shall agree, one tenth part of the whole, heretofore allowable to the Lord Admiral, being first taken out, to be disposed by the Council of State, for such uses as the Parliament shall direct and appoint.

Provided always, That if any prizes so taken, or any part thereof, shall appear, and be proved in the said Court of Admiralty to be any ship or goods belonging to any of the well-affected and good people of this commonwealth, remaining and continuing under the obedience and protection of the Parliament, and before taken or surprised from them by any enemy or rebel, or disaffected person, and afterwards again surprised and retaken by any of the fleet or ships employed in the service of the Parliament, or any private man of war, allowed as aforesaid, that then such ships and goods, and every such part and parts belonging to the said good people aforesaid, shall be adjudged to be restored, and shall be by decree of the said Court of Admiralty accordingly restored to such former owner or owners, paying for and in lieu of salvage, only one eighth part of the true value thereof; unless such ships so retaken

retaken shall appear to have been after their taking by the enemy, or rebels, or disaffected, furnished and set forth by them as men of war on their behalf: in which case the true and first owners to whom the same shall be restored, shall be adjudged to pay, and shall pay for salvage the full moyety of the true value of the said ships so retaken and restored.

Provided nevertheless, and it is further enacted, That the Council of State for the time being have hereby power to grant licence and leave to any of the ships of this nation to go to, and trade at Barbadoes, Antego, Bermudas, Virginia, or or any of them, without prejudice or damage, any thing in this act to the contrary notwithstanding.

And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said Council of State have hereby power and authority to send ships to any of the plantations aforesaid, and to grant commission or commissions to such person or persons as they shall think fit, with power to enforce all such to obedience as do or shall stand in opposition to the Parliament or their authority; and to grant pardons, and to settle governors in all or any the said islands, plantations and places, and do to all just things, and use all lawful means to settle and preserve them in peace and safety, until the parliament shall take further or other order therein, any letters patents, or other authority formerly granted or given to the contrary notwithstanding.

And to the end that due intimation and publication of this act may be made, and public notice thereof be taken, so that none may justly plead excuse through ignorance of the same, Be it ordered and enacted, That this present act shall  
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be published by the Serjeant at Arms attending the Parliament, three several days upon the Exchange, London, at the time of the concourse of merchants thither.

Passed 3 October.

[ *Cromwell's Act of Navigation.* ]

C A P. 22. \*

*Goods from foreign Parts by whom to be imported.*

FOR the increase of shipping and the encouragement of the navigation of this nation, which under the good providence and protection of God, is so great a means of the welfare and safety of this commonwealth; Be it enacted by this present Parliament, and the authority thereof, That from and after the 1st day of December, 1651, and from thence forward, no goods or commodities whatsoever, of the growth, production or manufacture of Asia, Africa, or America, or of any part thereof; or of any islands belonging to them, or any of them, or which are described or laid down in the usual maps and cards of those places, as well of the English plantations as others, shall be imported or brought into this Commonwealth of England, or into Ireland, or any other lands, islands, plantations or territories to this commonwealth belonging, or in their possession, in any other ship or ships, vessel or vessels

Blackstone, vol. 1. p. 419.

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whatsoever, but only in such as do truly and without fraud belong only to the people of this commonwealth, or the plantations thereof, as the proprietors or right owners thereof; and whereof the master and mariners are also for the most part of them, of the people of this commonwealth, under the penalty of the forfeiture and loss of all the goods that shall be imported contrary to this act; as also of the ship (with all her tackle, guns and apparel) in which the said goods or commodities shall be so brought in and imported; the one moiety to the use of the commonwealth, and the other moiety to the use and behoof of any person or persons who shall seize the said goods or commodities, and shall prosecute the same in any court of record within this commonwealth.

And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no goods or commodities of the growth, production or manufacture of Europe, or of any part thereof, shall after the first day of December, 1651, be imported or brought into this commonwealth of England, or into Ireland, or any other lands, islands, plantations or territories of this commonwealth belonging, or in their possession, in any ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, but such as do truly and without fraud belong only to the people of this commonwealth, as the true owners and proprietors thereof, and in no other, except only such foreign ships and vessels as do truly and properly belong to the people of that country or place, of which the said goods are the growth, production or manufacture; or to such ports where the said goods can only be, or most usually are first shipped for transportation; and that under the same penalty of forfeiture and loss expressed in the former

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branch of this act, the said forfeitures to be recovered and employed as is therein expressed.

And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no goods or commodities that are of foreign growth, production or manufacture, and which are to be brought into this commonwealth, in shipping belonging to the people thereof, shall be by them shipped or brought from any other place or places, country or countries, but only from those of their said growth, production or manufacture; or from those ports where the said goods and commodities can only, or are, or usually have been first shipped for transportation; and from none other places or countries, under the same penalty of forfeiture and loss expressed in the first branch of this act, the said forfeitures to be recovered and employed as is therein expressed.

And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no sort of cod-fish, ling, herring, pilchard, or any other kind of salted fish, usually fished for and caught by the people of this nation; nor any oil made, or that shall be made of any kind of fish whatsoever; nor any whale-fins, or whale-bones, shall from henceforth be imported into this commonwealth, or into Ireland, or any other lands, islands, plantations, or territories thereto belonging, or in their possession, but only such as shall be caught in vessels that do or shall truly and properly belong to the people of this nation, as proprietors and right owners thereof: and the said fish to be cured, and the oil aforesaid made by the people of this commonwealth, under the penalty and loss expressed in the said first branch of this present act; the said forfeit to be recovered and employed as is there expressed.

And

And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no sort of cod, ling, herring, pilchard, or any other kind of salted fish whatsoever, which shall be caught and cured by the people of this commonwealth, shall be from and after the 1st day of February, 1653, exported from any place or places belonging to this commonwealth, in any other ship or ships, vessel or vessels, save only in such as do truly and properly appertain to the people of this commonwealth, as right owners; and whereof the master and mariners are for the most part of them English, under the penalty and loss expressed in the said first branch of this present act; the said forfeit to be recovered and employed as is there expressed.

Provided always, That this act, nor any thing therein contained, extend not, or be meant to restrain the importation of any of the commodities of the Straights or Levant seas, laden in the shipping of this nation as aforesaid, at the usual ports or places for lading of them heretofore, within the said Straights or Levant seas, though the said commodities be not of the very growth of the said places.

Provided also, That this act nor any thing therein contained, extend not, nor be meant to restrain the importing of any East-India commodities laden in the shipping of this nation, at the usual port or places for lading of them heretofore in any part of those seas, to the southward and eastward of Cabo Bona Esperanza, although the said ports be not the very places of their growth.

Provided also, That it shall and may be lawful to and for any of the people of this commonwealth, in vessels or ships to them belonging, and whereof the master and mariners are of this nation

as aforesaid, to load and bring in from any of the ports of Spain and Portugal, all sorts of goods and commodities that have come from, or any way belonged unto the plantations or dominions of either of them respectively.

Be it also further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from henceforth it shall not be lawful to any person or persons whatsoever, to load or cause to be loaden and carried in any bottom or bottoms, ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, whereof any stranger or strangers born, (unless such as be denizens or naturalized) be owners, part owners, or master, any fish, victual, wares, or things of what kind or nature soever the same shall be, from one port or creek of this commonwealth, to another port or creek of the same, under penalty to every one that shall offend contrary to the true meaning of this branch of this present act, to forfeit all the goods that shall be so laden or carried, as also the ship upon which they shall be so laden or carried, the same forfeit to be recovered and employed as directed in the first branch of this present act.

Lastly, That this act nor any thing therein contained, extend not to bullion, nor yet to any goods taken, or that shall be taken by way of reprisal by any ship or ships, having commission from this commonwealth.

Provided, That this act, or any thing therein contained, shall not extend, nor be construed to extend to any silk or silk-wares which shall be brought by land from any parts of Italy, and there bought with the proceed of English commodities, sold either for money or in barter; but that it shall and may be lawful for any of the people of this commonwealth to ship the same  
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in English vessels from Ostend, Newport, Rotterdam, Middleburg, Amsterdam, or any ports thereabouts; the owners and proprietors first making oath by themselves, or other credible witness, before the commissioners of the customs for the time being, or their deputies, or one of the Barons of the Exchequer, that the goods aforesaid were so bought for his or their own proper account in Italy.

Passed 9 October.

F I N I S.

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TO THE PUBLIC.

AS the Political Transactions of this Country are Matters which concern every individual, a faithful Recital of them must afford particular Satisfaction. To effect this desirable Purpose, has been the Object of the present Printer of THE GENERAL ADVERTISER; and he Trusts, that the Accounts of the *Parliamentary Debates*, and of such *State Papers* as are laid before the House, are given in the Paper he Publishes, with the strictest Impartiality, and the most sedulous attention to Truth. The *Commercial Concerns* of the Public, the Business of the *Theatres*, and whatever happens worth recital,  
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